

THE MEANING AND HISTORY OF HAND FASTING

(AN EXPLANATION)

Introduction

.....and.....

It is our joy to witness and celebrate your HAND FASTING in a rich celebration, sustained as we are in the Mysterious Power of all Creation, The core of this Creation is LOVE itself...

You come here today as individuals, you come here today to Unite as one.....

As individuals you do not lose your identity, but instead you come to promise a New Life. A life of LOVE and a Life of UNITY.

THE CALL FOR PEACE

Before we begin, please join with me, in a calling for PEACE....

*Let there be peace in the EAST.
(ALL PRESENT to answer) So may it be.*

*Let there be peace in the SOUTH.
(ALL PRESENT to answer) So may it be.*

*Let there be peace in the WEST.
(ALL PRESENT to answer) So may it be.*

*Let there be peace in the NORTH.
(ALL PRESENT to answer) So may it be.*

Spirits of the four directions, you are asked to watch over and protect this Congregation....

The Calling of the Quarters and Blessing

In times past and ancient, it was believed that the Human Soul shared its characteristics with that of all and every living thing divine....

It is with this belief, which assigns virtues with the four directions, The EAST, the SOUTH, the WEST and the NORTH....

It is in this tradition that a blessing is offered in support of this ceremony....

BLESSED BE this Union with the gifts of the EAST - Communication of the Heart, the Mind and of the Body. Fresh beginnings with the rising of each New SUN. The Knowledge of this growth found in the sharing of silences.

BLESSED BE this Union with the gifts of the SOUTH - The warmth of Hearth and Home. The Heat of the Hearts Passion. The Light created by both, to illuminate the darkness of time...

BLESSED BE this Union with the gifts of the WEST - the deep commitments of the Ancient Lake. The Swift excitement of the River. The refreshing and cleansing of the Rain. The all-encompassing Passion of the Sea.

BLESSED BE this Union with the gifts of the NORTH - Firm foundations on which to build. Fertility of the Fields to enrich your lives. A Stable Home to which you may always return.

Spirits of the EAST, the SOUTH, the WEST and the NORTH, bring forth bounty, health and happiness to all present at this congregation.

....and....each of these BLESSINGS emphasises those things which will help build a Happy and Successful union.

....and.....will you please join Hands in the Circle?

....and.... before you make your VOW and DECLARATION to each other, Let it be known that since you're Paths Crossed, your individual lives have forged strong bonds between each other.

As you make preparation to Unite and form a Life of Eternal Partnership, you should strive to make real the Ideals that give Strength and Meaning to this Ceremony.

With full awareness, know now that within this Circle you are not only declaring your intent to be Hand Fasted before this Congregation but also you speak your intent to the Gods....

The promises you make today and the ties that are Bound here today will, greatly strengthen your Union....

They will cross the years and the lives of each Soul's growth....

Do you both still seek to enter into this Ceremony??

Couple - YES, we seek to enter.

These are the hands:

These are the Hands that will Passionately Love and Cherish you through the years of a Lifetime.

These are the Hands that will countless times wipe away Tears from your Eyes. The Tears of Sorrow and the Tears of Joy....

These are the Hands that will comfort you in time of Illness and Hold you when Fear or Grief rack your mind....

These are the Hands that will hold you tight as you Struggle through lifes Difficult times....

These are the Hands that will Support you and encourage you to Chase your Dreams....

TOGETHER, everything you wish for can be realised...

DC to the groom -

QUESTION - *You have taken.....to be your WIFE - Your eternal Partner and your constant Friend. Will you Love her without reservation, honour and respect her. Comfort her in time of Distress and grow with her in Mind and n Spirit?*

GROOMS ANSWER - I WILL

DC to the bride -

QUESTION - *You have taken.....to be your HUSBAND - Your eternal Partner and constant Friend. Will you Love him without reservation, honour and respect him. Comfort him in time of Distress and grow with him in Mind and in Spirit?*

BRIDES ANSWER - I WILL

The Binding

Please continue to hold hands (a cord is draped across the couple's hands)

DC - TO THE GROOM

QUESTION - Will you cause her pain?

ANSWER - I may.

QUESTION - Is that your intent?

ANSWER - NO

DC - TO THE BRIDE

QUESTION - Will you cause him pain?

ANSWER - I may.

QUESTION - Is that your intent?

ANSWER - NO

TO BOTH

QUESTION TO BOTH - Will you both share each other's pain and seek to ease it?

BOTH ANSWER - Yes

And so, the first binding is made (ties knot).

.....X.....

QUESTION to GROOM - Will you share in her Laughter?

ANSWER - Yes

QUESTION to BRIDE- Will you share in his Laughter?

ANSWER - Yes

QUESTION to BOTH - Will you both seek the brightness and positive in each other?

BOTH ANSWER - Yes

And so, the binding is made (ties knot)

.....X.....

QUESTION to the BRIDE - Will you burden him?

ANSWER - I may.

QUESTION - Is that your intent?

ANSWER - No

QUESTION to the GROOM - Will you burden her?

ANSWER - I may.

QUESTION - Is that your intent?

ANSWER - No

QUESTION to BOTH - Will you share in the burdens of each other so that your Spirits may grow in this Union?

BOTH ANSWER - Yes

*And so, the binding is made (ties knot)
.....X.....*

QUESTION to BRIDE - Will you share in his Dreams?

ANSWER - Yes

QUESTION to GROOM - Will you share in her Dreams?

ANSWER - Yes

QUESTION to BOTH - Will you Dream together to create new realities and new hopes?

BOTH ANSWER - Yes

*And so, the binding is made (ties knot)
.....X.....*

QUESTION to GROOM - Will you cause her anger?

ANSWER - I may.

QUESTION - Is that your intent?

ANSWER - No.

QUESTION to BRIDE - Will you cause him anger?

ANSWER - I may.

QUESTION - Is that your intent?

ANSWER - No.

QUESTION to BOTH - Will you take the Heat of the Anger and use it to temper the Strength of this Union?

BOTH ANSWER - We will.

*And so, the binding is made (ties knot)
.....X.....*

QUESTION to BRIDE - Will you honour him?

ANSWER - I will.

QUESTION to GROOM - Will you honour her?

ANSWER - I will.

QUESTION to BOTH - Will you seek to never give cause to break that Honour?

BOTH ANSWER - We never shall do so.

*And so, the Final binding is made (ties knot)
.....X.....*

The knots of this Binding are not formed by these CHORDS but by the VOWS that you have made to each other this day.

(The cord is untied)

..... and The rings you have exchanged at Dode signify to all your lasting commitment: in true Pagan tradition I invite you to toast each other in Mead, an ancient blending of wine and honey.

(Couple to drink from the mead Chalice)

Recognition of Marriage

..... and have administered the sacrament of marriage to each other and only a couple can sanctify it. Nothing can grant me the authority to declare that which only two hearts can declare and that which only two souls can make a reality....

.... and You have announced to all present and to each other, the truths that are already written in your hearts. We joyfully observe that upon this day you have declared yourselves to be Husband and Wife.

The closing of the circle

Spirits of the four directions we thank you for your presence at Dode this day.

.... and You leave this circle of your family and friends in the knowledge of their love and of their hopes and best wishes for your future. Know that if you wish you may return in one year and one day to re-affirm your vows made here this day.

The departure blessing

Now each of you will be warmth to the other.

Now there is no more loneliness

Now you are two persons but there is only one life between you

Go now to the place of your dwelling and enter into the days of your life together

And may your life be long and happy upon this earth

The jumping of the broomstick

Supplies a Besom and instructs the couple to jump over it to signify the leaping into a new life as HUSBAND and WIFE.